

## ABSTRACT

**Include Figur 1**

5 Load balancing between agents in a network skillset has become a particular  
problem. Not only is there a need to ensure efficient use of agent resources in  
the network skillset but increasingly labour law and union requirements mean  
that work must be shared between agents in an equitable manner. A source  
contact node in a network of contact centres requests nodal longest idle agent  
information from the other contact centres in the network. Using this  
10 information a network longest idle agent is identified and the incoming contact  
routed to that agent. A reservation system is used in combination with the  
longest idle agent information in order to prevent dropped contacts and to  
ensure equal sharing of work between agents in a network skillset. Contact  
centre servers are linked over a separate network, isolated from a network  
linking the contact centre switches.

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